

2014 Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Grant Process, Advisory Committee Survey Results

Jen Masterson
Data and Special Projects Manager
December 2014

General Conclusions

The following analysis is based on survey responses from 101 advisory committee members who participated in the 2014 Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant round.

Key Action Items for 2014 Grant Round from Evaluator Survey

- Evaluate the use of Project Snapshot as a tool for advisory committee members and whether additional functionality and/or training is necessary. Survey comments indicate that some advisory committee members didn't know about Project Snapshot and others had technical issues that limited its use.
- Make improvements in the turn-around time for reimbursements.
- Review advisory committee feedback on evaluation criteria.
- Provide additional advance notice of the post-evaluation conference and work on technology solutions to improve remote participation.

Summary of Comments and Survey Responses

Evaluators are generally satisfied with the process.

A strong majority of respondents felt that the project evaluation process was fair and that the amount of time for presentation and comment during evaluation was adequate. Using web links was a challenge for some of the evaluators.

Survey respondents were generally satisfied with their experience working with RCO staff. All respondents felt that staff managed the meeting time and participants effectively. Staff moderators for technical review and evaluation received high marks from advisory committee members.

Respondents provided comments on the evaluation criteria, particularly recommendations on improvements to the criteria used in the WWRP-Trails program.

Three quarters of survey respondents use manuals as a resource during the grant round. Survey respondents generally felt that the manuals have needed content and are well organized.

Several respondents noted issues with dialing into the post-evaluation conference remotely. Respondents also commented on the need for RCO staff to provide more advance notice and adjust the timeline for the conference.

Response Details

Contents

Key Action Items for 2014 Grant Round from Evaluator Survey	2
Summary of Comments and Survey Responses.....	2
Survey Approach.....	6
Survey Response	6
Question Series 1: Technical Review	8
Notes.....	8
Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type	9
Question Series 2: Evaluation Process	13
Notes.....	14
Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type	14
Question Series 3: Interaction with RCO Staff	19
Notes.....	19
What could my moderator do to improve?	20
Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type	22
Question Series 4: Overall satisfaction	25
Notes.....	25
Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type	26
Question Series 5: What was your experience working with manuals?	31
Notes.....	31
Comments by Program and Evaluation Type.....	31
Question Series 6: Do you have suggestions for how RCO could improve participation in post-evaluation conferences?	33
Notes.....	33
Categorized Comments by Program	33
Question Series 7: Is there a part of the process that causes you frustration?	36
Notes.....	36
Comments by Program.....	36

Question Series 8: Is there a part of the process that works especially well for you?	42
Notes.....	42
Comments by Program.....	42

Program Acronym List

Program Acronym	Program Name
ALEA	Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
BFP	Boating Facilities Program
BIG	Boating Infrastructure Grant
FARR	Firearms and Archery Range Recreation
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
NOVA - Education & Enforcement	Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program - Education & Enforcement
NOVA - Recreation	Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program - Nonhighway Road, Off-road Vehicle, Nonmotorized
RTP	Recreational Trails Program
WWRP - Critical Habitat	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Critical Habitat
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Farmland Preservation
WWRP - Local Parks	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Local Parks
WWRP - Riparian Protection	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Riparian Protection
WWRP - State Lands Development	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - State Lands Development
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - State Lands Restoration
WWRP - State Parks	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - State Parks
WWRP - Trails	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Trails
WWRP - Urban Wildlife Habitat	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Urban Wildlife Habitat
WWRP - Water Access	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Water Access

Survey Approach

The selected recipients were listed in PRISM as advisory committee members for one or more programs in 2014. RCO staff distributed the survey to 151 contacts on November 7, 2014. The survey closed December 3, 2014.

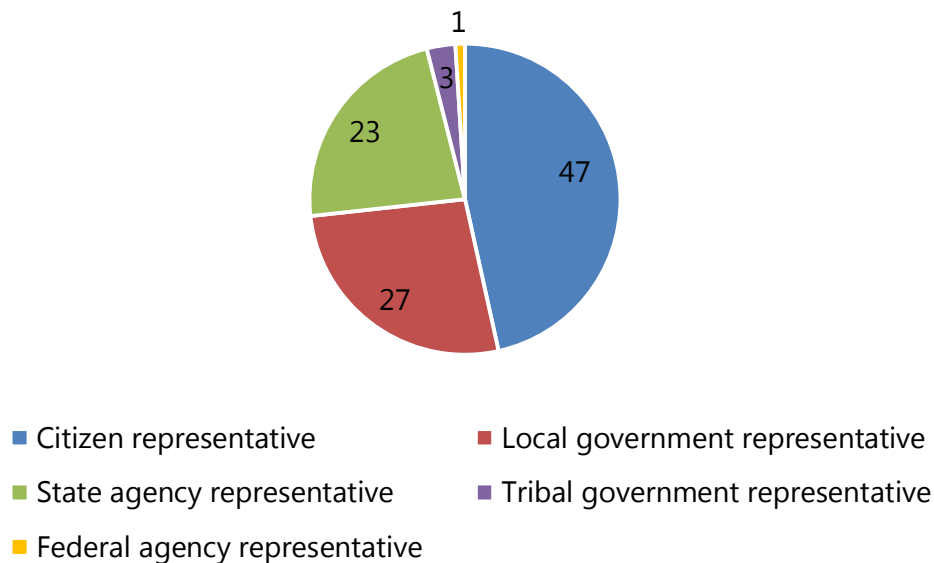
Respondents had the option to provide feedback for more than one program. This accommodated advisory committee members who participated in multiple programs. Nearly 11 percent of respondents provided feedback for more than one program.

Survey Response

One hundred and one people responded – a 67 percent response rate based on the people contacted.¹ There was a slight decline in participation from 2012, when the response rate for this survey was 74 percent.

Slightly less than half (47 percent) of survey respondents were citizen representatives. In comparison, approximately 44 percent of voting advisory committee members in 2014 were citizen representatives.

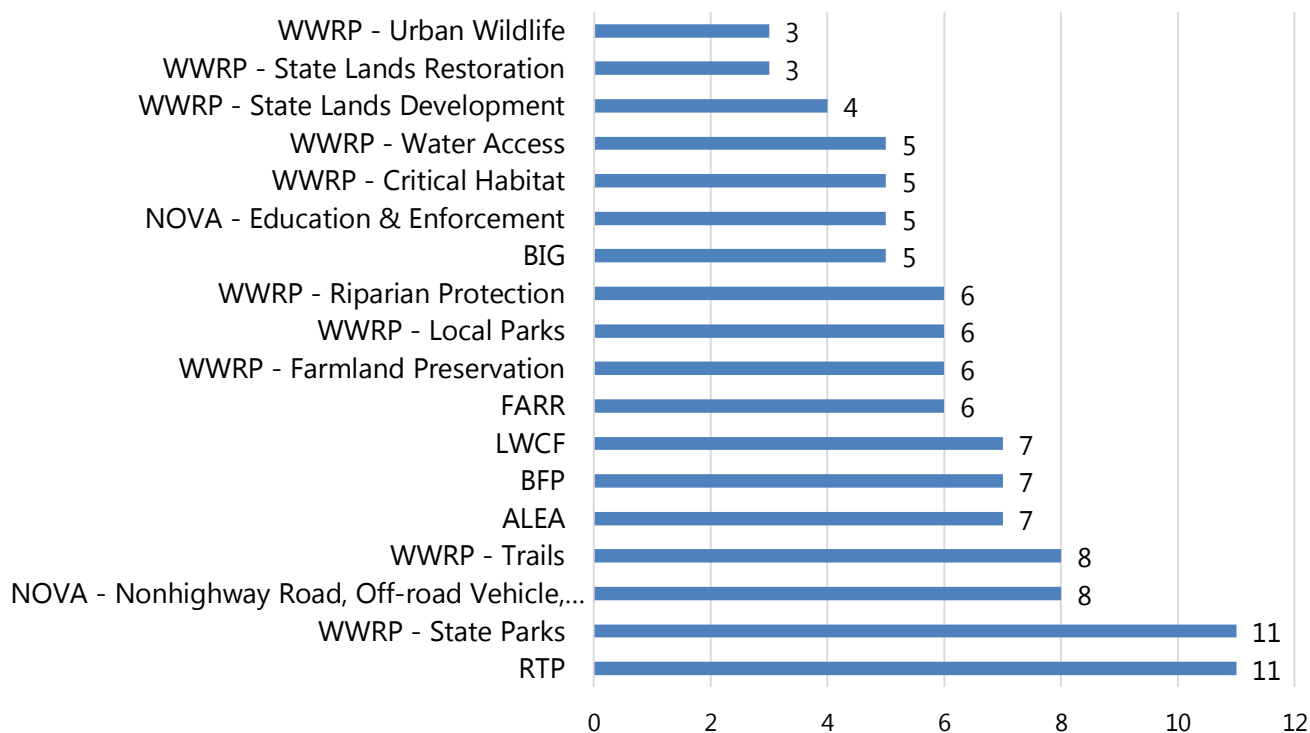
Advisory Committee Survey Respondents, by Type



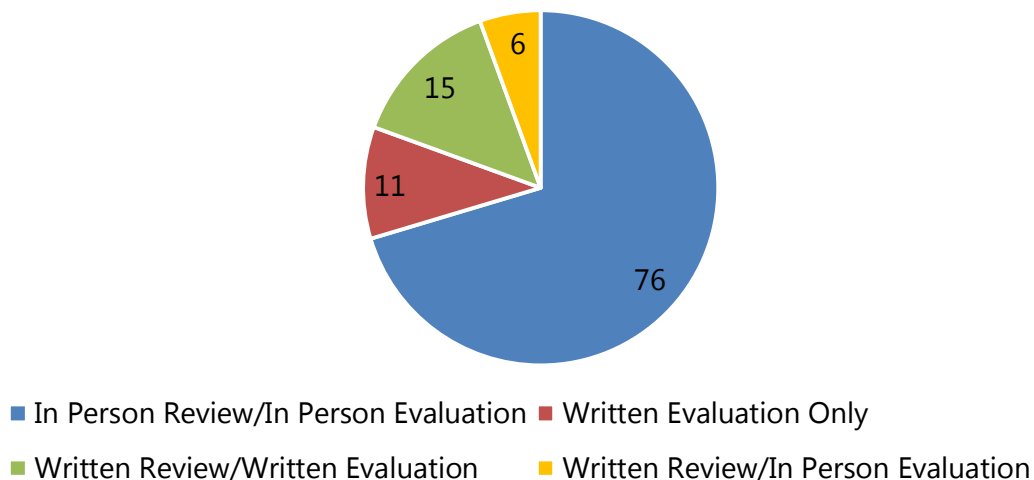
¹ The number of responses to each question in the survey varies from this total because some participants skipped questions and/or did not complete the survey.

Survey respondents represent a variety of programs.² The majority (70 percent) participated in both in-person review and evaluation.

Advisory Committee Survey Respondents, by Program



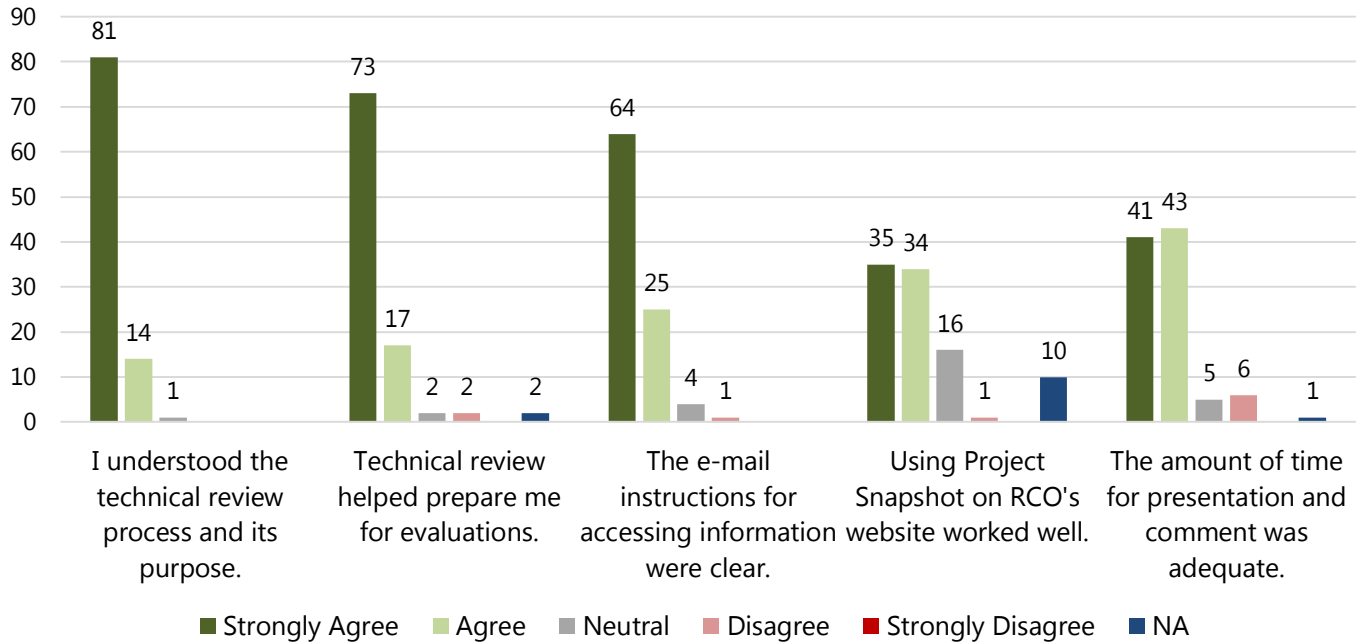
Advisory Committee Survey Respondents, by Review and Evaluation Method



² Although survey respondents provided feedback by program, some advisory committees evaluated multiple programs but completed the survey for just one. For example, the WWRP Habitat Acquisition advisory committee evaluated Critical Habitat, Natural Areas, and Urban Wildlife Habitat.

Question Series 1: Technical Review

Experience with Technical Review



	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Percent Neutral ³	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree
I understood the technical review process and its purpose.	0%	1%	99%
Technical review helped prepare me for evaluations.	2%	2%	96%
The e-mail instructions for accessing information were clear.	1%	4%	95%
Using Project Snapshot on RCO's website worked well.	1%	19%	80%
The amount of time for presentation and comment was adequate.	6%	5%	88%

Notes

- Survey respondents were generally satisfied with technical review.
- Approximately 10 percent of advisory committee members indicated not applicable (NA) when asked whether Project Snapshot worked well. RCO did not use Project Snapshot for all programs in 2014. Survey comments indicate that some advisory committee members didn't know about Project Snapshot and others had technical issues that limited its use. These responses may also contribute to the 19 percent of respondents who were neutral on whether Project Snapshot worked well.
- In their comments, survey respondents suggested that RCO staff should consider completing technical review for selective programs.

³ Responses of "NA" were not included in this summary table of percentages.

Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents. Programs marked with an asterisk denote comments made by people who responded for more than one program.

E-mail Instructions

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
WWRP - State Lands Development	Written Review and Evaluation	For the WWRP projects, sometimes the email instructions were not clear and there was some information that was not completely correct.
WWRP - State Lands Development	Written Review and Evaluation	The email instructions could be more clear and timely in some cases.

Presentations

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	I felt that some presenters needed more time to present and answer questions in Technical Review.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think the technical review presentations could leave out information that would be included in the final about the land trust and it's capabilities. I think all presenters should be told to follow the criteria outline and to label and number their slides.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	In my opinion time used up by organizations talking about themselves in the riparian protection presentations was not helpful. Everybody always says how wonderful they are. Their credentials in track record can be adequately evaluated based on written materials.

Project Snapshot/PRISM

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
LWCF	In Person Review and Evaluation	I didn't use Project Snapshot. I relied on the presentation and the PRISM materials provided during evaluation.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	I don't know what Project Snapshot is
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	It'd be great if the online project info matched the printed reports.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	The technical review was clear and worked great. Only documents a few were not possible to open at my computer.

		<p>This were the 'Application Reports':</p> <p>"ERR_RESPONSE_HEADERS_MULTIPLE_CONTENT_DISPOSITION"</p> <p>I think the cause was the name of this documents. There were two dots in the name under which these documents were saved on the website. If it would be saved under a different name, (with only one dot), there would have been no problem to open it. All other documents were good to open.</p>
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I never accessed the web site. I felt the staff was well prepared and knowledgeable.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I had issues with the website. The first time i accessed it - it worked fine but the second time it went a bit crazy downloading all the project forms, attachments, etc.. I appreciated the printed copy when i arrived - it helped me out.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	I don't even know what "Project Snapshot" is. I will try to fix that before next year's tech review.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	Even using two computers, I was not able to read, evaluate, and respond to the hundred applications by e-mail. What I needed were paper copies of the applications and, in the best of all possible worlds, site visits.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	Reading 100 applications on my computer and giving the writers of each application useful advice about how to keep or improve their application and doing so on my computer was more difficult for me than I could do or was willing to do. Even when I used two computers to do the first batch. I think that asking volunteers to do the technical reviews is asking too much. RCO staff, if anyone, should do the technical review work. Or maybe, if I had had a paper copy of each application and could have inserted notes in each application before sending it back, I would have been able to do something useful.

Time

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	After several years on the committee, I feel MORE time on technical, and possibly LESS time at evaluation might be helpful. Not only more time with each (most) applicants would be helpful, but EXTRA time to be used by the committee, after the daily "technical" sessions end, to discussion "issues" that come to mind after the applicant leaves, and/or unique or unusual situations that can then be debated, and then passed along to the applicants via the grant writers.

LWCF	In Person Review and Evaluation	Time was tight, but efficient. I wouldn't recommend changes.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	The presentation time was adequate. My observation is that there were many instances when time ran short yet the panel needed to have a few more questions answered. So, I would recommend, for this question and for the evaluation process (#4 below) the following: 1) Extend the time for each applicant (presentation and questions) from 20 to 25 minutes; 2) Schedule a 10 minute break after every third presentation; and 3) extend the process one more day. I know that this is costly but my concern is two fold: 1) to help improve the probability that the best projects rise to the top and 2) to help ensure that the advisory panel members stay fresh. It can be tough on members given the tightness of the schedule.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	A bit more time for presentations and between for evaluators
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	Some comment/question portions lasted a lot longer than others, providing really valuable information that gave some projects an advantage. While I don't think we need a longer comment/question portion, the consistency is pretty critical for fairness.

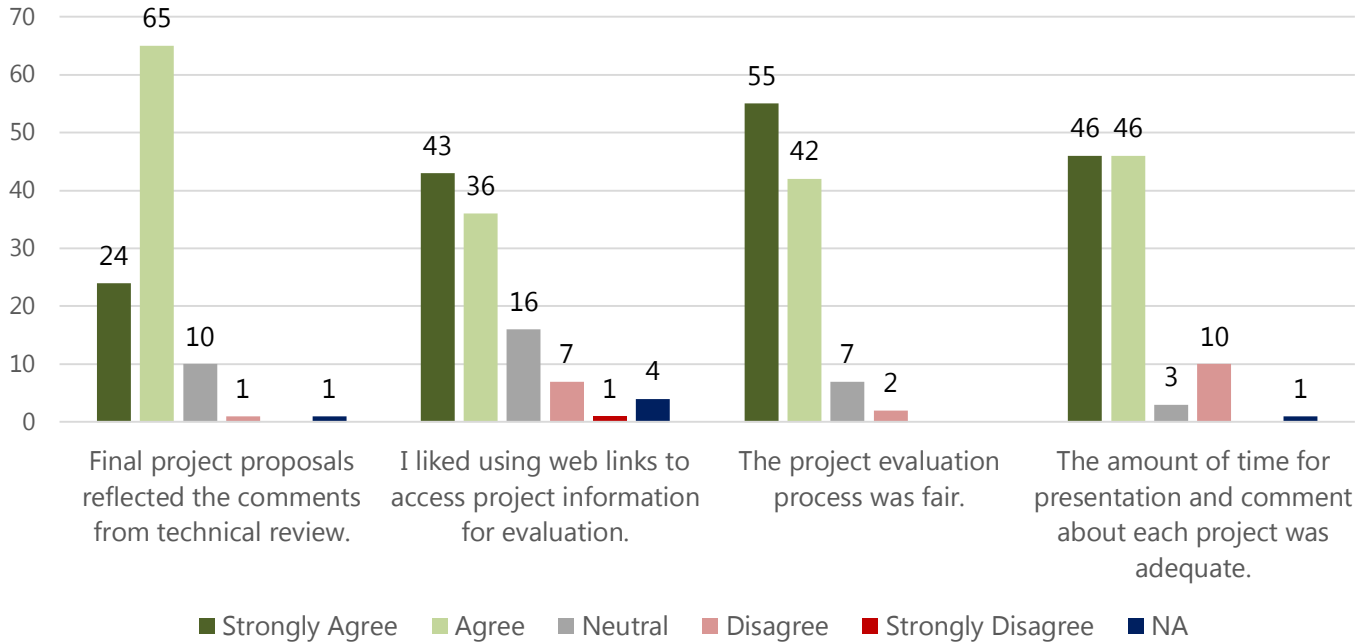
Other

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Recommend that evaluators use Google maps to become completely familiar with the area of study/review.
LWCF	In Person Review and Evaluation	The only confusion for me seems to be with the federal goals which changed right before review. That makes it difficult for both the presenters and the evaluators.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	Process seemed smooth and effective.
NOVA - Recreation*	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	These projects are similar each cycle and nothing new or new projects were submitted for grant funding. Perhaps consider a federal grant allotment so that they don't dominate the grant review process.
BIG	Written Review and Evaluation	The process was made easy to understand and staff were very helpful
NOVA - Education & Enforcement*	Written Review and Evaluation	Concerning my review and evaluation of the Education and Enforcement applications: This will be my only comment. The applications were so much alike that, for

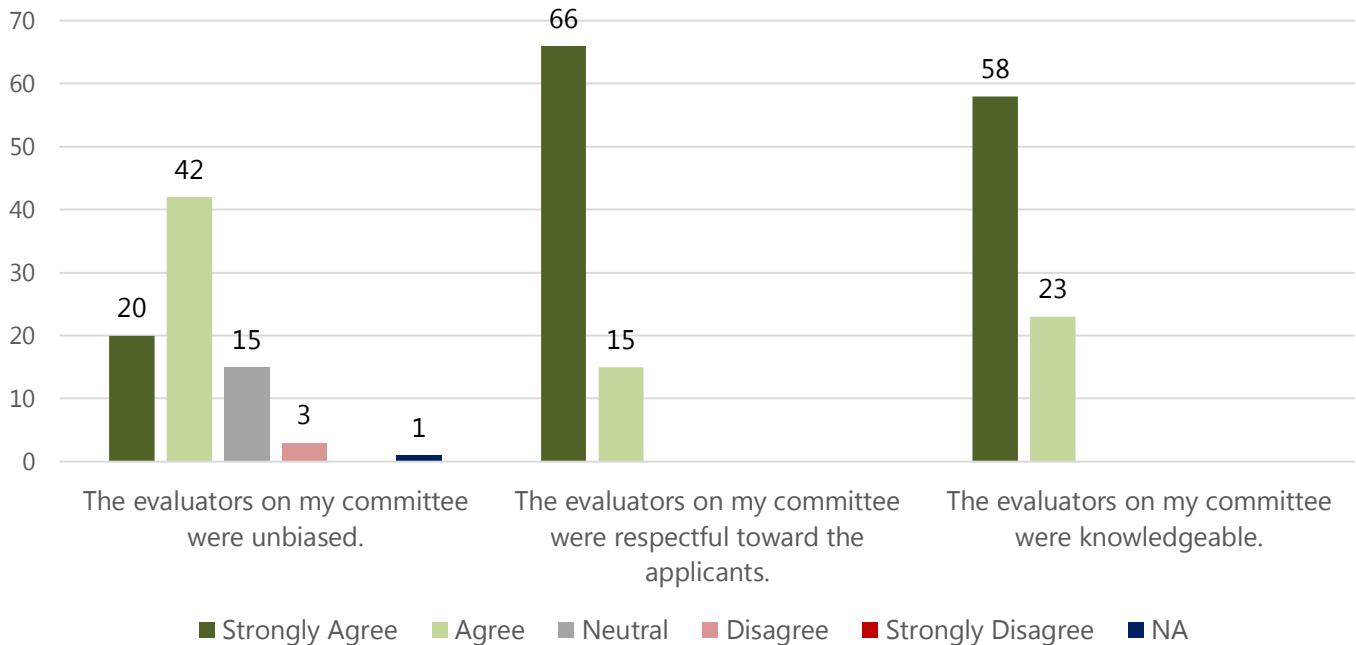
		me, it was difficult to grade and rank them, and, for me, it was additionally difficult to respond to these applications fairly by filling in blanks on a computer screen. I did what I could.
WWRP - State Lands Development	Written Review and Evaluation	It may be time to rethink the technical review process - is it needed, is there a better way to do it. Perhaps technical review should be left to RCO staff.
WWRP - State Lands Development	Written Review and Evaluation	i am somewhat ambivalent about technical review. The idea isn't necessarily a bad one but: 1) the grant applicants are professionals and have access to internal resources - they should know what is expected for a quality application and do it right the first time. 2) the applicants know that their grants aren't being scored at this point and in some cases it was clear that the grants weren't complete and ready for review
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	Marguerite's help was critical! While I doubt the directions could have been any clearer, there is always room to interpret. Her wise hand made it possible for me to understand better how to accomplish my task
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	Please note that I currently review for WWRP-Riparian and WWRP-State Lands Restoration, and previously reviewed for ALEA. These survey responses are based on my experience with all three of these.

Question Series 2: Evaluation Process

Experience with the Evaluation Process



Experience with Fellow Evaluators



	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Percent Neutral ⁴	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree
Final project proposals reflected the comments from technical review.	1%	10%	88%
I liked using web links to access project information for evaluation.	7%	15%	74%
The project evaluation process was fair.	2%	7%	92%
The amount of time for presentation and comment about each project was adequate.	9%	3%	87%
The evaluators on my committee were unbiased.	4%	19%	77%
The evaluators on my committee were respectful toward the applicants.	0%	0%	100%
The evaluators on my committee were knowledgeable.	0%	0%	100%

Notes

- A strong majority of respondents (92 percent) felt that the project evaluation process was fair and that the amount of time for presentation and comment about each project was adequate (87 percent).
- Advisory committee respondents were unanimous in their responses that evaluators were respectful towards applicants and knowledgeable. Over three quarters also felt that fellow evaluators were unbiased.
- Respondent comments centered on the perception of evaluation bias, the evaluation process, whether presenters had enough time, and issues with online file access.
- Some respondents commented that it was more challenging to evaluate projects that did not go through technical review and it was frustrating when suggestions from technical review were not incorporated into final presentations.

Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents. Programs marked with an asterisk denote comments made by people who responded for more than one program.

Evaluation Bias

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
ALEA	In Person Review and Evaluation	I don't know whether evaluators were unbiased or not, but they seemed to be.
LWCF	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think the differing evaluations were reflective of differing experience/expertise/priorities of evaluators and were appropriate

⁴ Responses of "NA" were not included.

LWCF*	In Person Review and Evaluation	There appeared to be some bias against mountain bike projects by some evaluators. I know that their reasoning had to do with the number of people who would use the facilities, but there are many funded projects that have specific user groups, and mountain bikers are just another.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	Nobody is unbiased, but everyone worked to their strengths and did not try to sway people, just gave their perspectives. We had enough balance on our committee to be very fair. Technical review is critical for projects and those organizations that did not go through technical review suffered during final review.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	We need to find a better way to compare small projects on the San Juans with huge rangeland projects in eastern Washington. We need to be clearer about environmental values and farmland and how to balance that.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I don't think evaluators are unbiased, rather, I think we acknowledge our bias and work hard to minimize it.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	I was wondering that colleagues of the same governmental offices that were asking for grants for funding, also were in the committee. It would be logical to have them coming to the technical review, to give more clarifications about the projects and the importance, but I am not sure if they also should have a vote in the evaluation process.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	Scoring questions on cost efficiencies was not being scored fairly.

Evaluation Process

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Frankly, I thought the laptops used by committee members during technical review was a bit of a distraction. I did not bring one. There seems to be little reason. All the information is available prior to the presentation, the time allotted is barely enough, and what about the "personal business" aspect of having a computer between evaluator and applicant. In a way, I understand that having ALL of the information at one's fingertips is an asset, unfortunately there is barely enough time to tell the applicants 'to add more pictures.'
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	1) I was able to give fair evaluation for projects in places that I knew first-hand, in places that I had been more than once. For projects in places that I had never been, I had to

		guess. 2) Concerning requests for maintenance money: Every local, state, and federal public natural area in Washington needs money for maintenance. I found no reasonable and consistent and fair way of saying yes to some and no to others, and "too high in \$" to some and "too low in \$" to others.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	Concerning applications for funding for sites that I knew about first-hand, I was fair. For applications for funding for sites that I didn't know about first-hand, I guessed.
NOVA - Recreation*	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	The amount of technical review didn't add as much value as I thought it would to my understanding of the projects. I would recommend that RCO staff provide the technical review. Too much work for volunteers.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think it is important for evaluators to ask questions and/or have BRIEF discussions to help clarify science or ongoing issues involved in a project evaluators may not have knowledge/experience in. These instances appeared to help the presentation receive a more accurate score.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I believe that the committee as a whole attempted to do their best to identify the projects that best met the criteria. Their questions were a reflection of this objective.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	Some more time needs to be put in on developing a streamlined format for the paper sheets to utilize during scoring (very helpful) with additional project information available online. Not sure how to be integrate the online info, however, and too many things to look at other than the screen and listening to the presenter can be challenge.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	Evaluating the State Parks inholdings 'project' was a waste of time for everyone, that category is a no-brainer and should be automatic.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	It seemed to me that adoption of feedback from the technical review was haphazard. Some made good use of it, other ignored it or only made the slightest modifications in response.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	Some of the final project proposals did not seem to reflect the feedback from technical review, but it seemed to be the presenters chose not to use the feedback that was provided.
WWRP - Urban Wildlife Habitat*	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think it is important for evaluators to ask questions and have a BRIEF discussion when they aren't clear about science or issues.

WWRP - Water Access	In Person Review and Evaluation	Comment explaining neutral rank on "evaluation process was fair." I wonder if the heavy weight of importance given to the oral presentation of the proposals puts smaller agencies at a disadvantage? Are persuasive presentations persuasive because of the project, or because of the presenter? I don't have answers or conclusions to these questions. They are worth thought. The neutral response on evaluators being unbiased relates to the policy around allowing participation by staff from the same agency that applies for funds. I know there are controls in place to address that, but it still feels like it is not possible to completely control bias creeping in when someone is ranking projects from their own agency.
WWRP - Water Access	In Person Review and Evaluation	There were a couple of first time presentations at the evaluation that did not participate in the technical review. Not enough time to ask questions to better understand the project and complete the evaluation scoring.

Other

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Recommend that presenters use more aerial maps and photos of subject project.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I enjoyed participating in the evaluation process. It was challenging, but well laid out and the direction from staff was very helpful in deciding how to rate projects.

Time

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Again, some presenters needed more time.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	We received the final applications one day, heard a brief presentation by the applicants of each application the next, asked questions and made comments after each presentation, and had two minutes or less following each presentation to score it on ten values. Too much, too fast. ten items concerning the applicant's presentation.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	In my opinion time used up by organizations talking about themselves in the riparian protection presentations was not helpful. Everybody always says how wonderful they

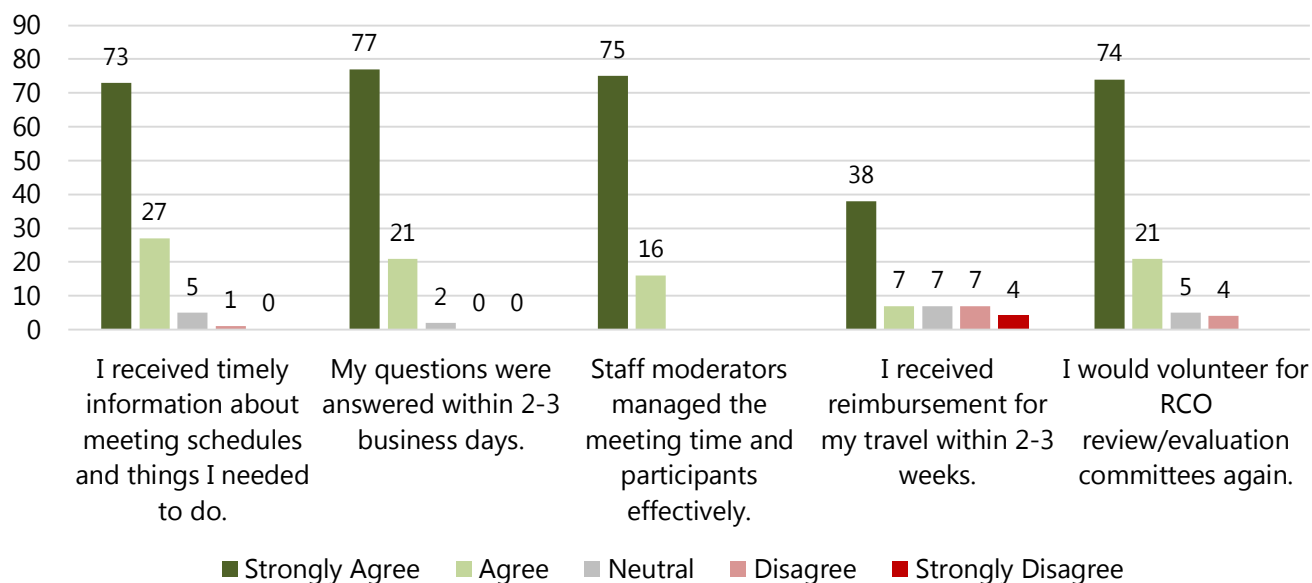
		are. Their credentials in track record can be adequately evaluated based on written materials.
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Again, some presenters needed more time.

Online File Access

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Did not use web links during evaluation just in technical review
RTP	Written Evaluation	I had trouble opening the PDF files due to their size. RCO then broke them down and it worked fine
RTP	Written Evaluation	The General Projects 1 file wouldn't download the first 4 times I attempted.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	really really wish that I could download al of the main PDFs for each project with one click instead of having to do them one at a time.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	Using web links and computers during the evaluation wasn't highly encouraged, was it? I felt I shouldn't be doing a lot of that during the final presentations but might have done more of it had I not felt constrained. Was good for the tech review.

Question Series 3: Interaction with RCO Staff

Please tell us about your experience working with RCO staff.



	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Percent Neutral ⁵	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree
I received timely information about meeting schedules and things I needed to do.	1%	5%	94%
My questions were answered within 2-3 business days.	0%	2%	98%
Staff moderators managed the meeting time and participants effectively.	0%	0%	100%
I received reimbursement for my travel within 2-3 weeks.	17%	11%	71%
I would volunteer for RCO review/evaluation committees again.	4%	5%	91%

Notes

- Survey respondents were generally satisfied with their experience working with RCO staff.
- All respondents felt that staff managed the meeting time and participants effectively.
- RCO staff could make improvements in the turn-around time for reimbursements.
- Survey respondents who provided comments regarding how the session moderator could improve were generally positive.

⁵ Responses of "NA" were not included.

- General comments were categorized into several areas: reimbursement, scheduling, the time commitment of advisory committee members, and kudos for RCO staff.

What could my moderator do to improve?

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents for this open-ended survey question. Programs marked with an asterisk denote comments made by people who responded for more than one program.

Program	Comment
ALEA	Allow time without applicants present for evaluators to share comments and questions about proposals.
ALEA*	great moderation!
ALEA	It was well organizer and there was not much more to be done. The project supervisors might be a bit more aggressive in helping the sponsors.
ALEA	Marguerite was amazing in her moderator duties.
ALEA	No suggestions. Both moderators (for technical review and the final presentations) did an excellent job.
ALEA	Things were well run and organized.
BFP	Absolutely no complaints. I might suggest using "staff" as moderator even more.
BFP	Give presenters a "2 minute warning" - some other time might be better, but I was going for the concept.
BFP	Nothing. I realize situations change and in most cases I can accommodate but there were a couple of times this year where I could not.
BFP	Project managers should remind presenters to speak loudly due to the large room/venue. Clarify if projects that add moorage should score higher than those that do not add moorage.
LWCF*	I think the moderators did very well. The process ran like a well-oiled machine.
LWCF	Very satisfied with moderators -- no improvements to recommend.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	Marguerite was timely with and polite to presenters, sent out and responded well to emails; not much to improve on that I can see.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	None
WWRP - Critical Habitat	nothing
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	Moderating was done very well...
WWRP - Local Parks	I have no suggestions. Each RCO staff serving as a moderator does a wonderful job.
WWRP - Local Parks	Keep better track of time, not necessarily w/ the presentations, but with the intro/closing each day.

WWRP - Local Parks	One might experiment with a system (like Toastmasters) that gives the applicants a non-verbal "signal" regarding how much time they have left for their presentations.
WWRP - Local Parks	She does a great job, no changes
WWRP - Riparian Protection	Moderator was excellent!
WWRP - Riparian Protection	Our moderator, Marguerite Austin did a great job. I think we as committee could have asked more question to the presenters of the projects, but it was my first time in a committee, so I was somewhat hesitating.
WWRP - State Lands Development⁶	The moderator does an excellent job and is committed to making sure that the process is fair and professional. One improvement could be to not switch moderators within the evaluation process.
WWRP - State Parks	I thought the moderation was excellent.
WWRP - State Parks	Marguerite was great.
WWRP - State Parks	Nothing. She was great!
WWRP - Trails	Excellent job by moderator. No improvements needed.
WWRP - Trails	My moderator did a terrific job informing us of our roles, about the process and keeping the presenters on task and on time.
WWRP - Trails	Nothing necessary.
WWRP - Trails	Nothing. My moderator was instructive, respectful and very knowledgeable about the review process and the process for "no funding".
WWRP - Trails	Our moderator was excellent. I don't have any suggestions for even minor improvements this time around.
WWRP – Urban Wildlife Habitat*	Marguerite did a very good job.
WWRP - Urban Wildlife Habitat *	None
WWRP - Urban Wildlife Habitat	Nothing, they're great and always have been.

⁶ This advisory committee member likely participated in more than one program, but only selected WWRP-State Lands Development on his/her survey. State Lands Development did not have a moderator.

Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents, separated into general categories. Programs marked with an asterisk denote comments made by people who responded for more than one program.

Reimbursement

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Fantastic staff. I did submit my first (ever) expense sheet (for parking) but have seen/heard anything. Fantastic experience. Hope I can contribute a few more rounds.
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	As of today (November 24, 2014) I still have not been reimbursed
FARR	In Person Review and Evaluation	reimbursement took 6 weeks
NOVA - Education & Enforcement	Written Review and Evaluation	Regarding reimbursement for travel, I have not yet received mine, but I was not pre-registered with a "Statewide Payee" number, so that sub-process is probably what made payment slower.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	The reimbursement took longer than expected.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	Reimbursement has taken slightly longer (up to a month, but I can live with that).

Scheduling

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	The only problem I had was an event was scheduled several months in advance and I made plans accordingly. When the event changed I didn't always it didn't have the flexibility to meet the new dates. This happened in a couple of times in 2014 and I felt guilty that I couldn't participate like I wanted.
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Information arrived too close to the meeting. I wanted to confirm schedule and plans prior to making hotel reservations and balancing work responsibilities in my job.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	There should have been a little more follow-up on the schedule and a confirmation process. I only made one day of technical review because I missed the initial e-mail about the days that it was scheduled for.

WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	Local Parks is jam-packed - it'd be helpful to break up presentations, never having more than 4 w/o a break. You might doing fewer per day and adding a few more days, even if that means running into a second week or to Friday.
WWRP - Water Access	In Person Review and Evaluation	Info on the evaluation/project scoring conference call was not received until a couple days before. More advance notice would be greatly appreciated.

Time Commitment

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	I spent too much time with this process at home, too much time in Olympia, and too much time acting blindly.
NOVA - Recreation*	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	Perhaps. This evaluation process is very time-intensive and takes many hours both for the technical review of the different grant categories and the final evaluation process.

Staff Kudos

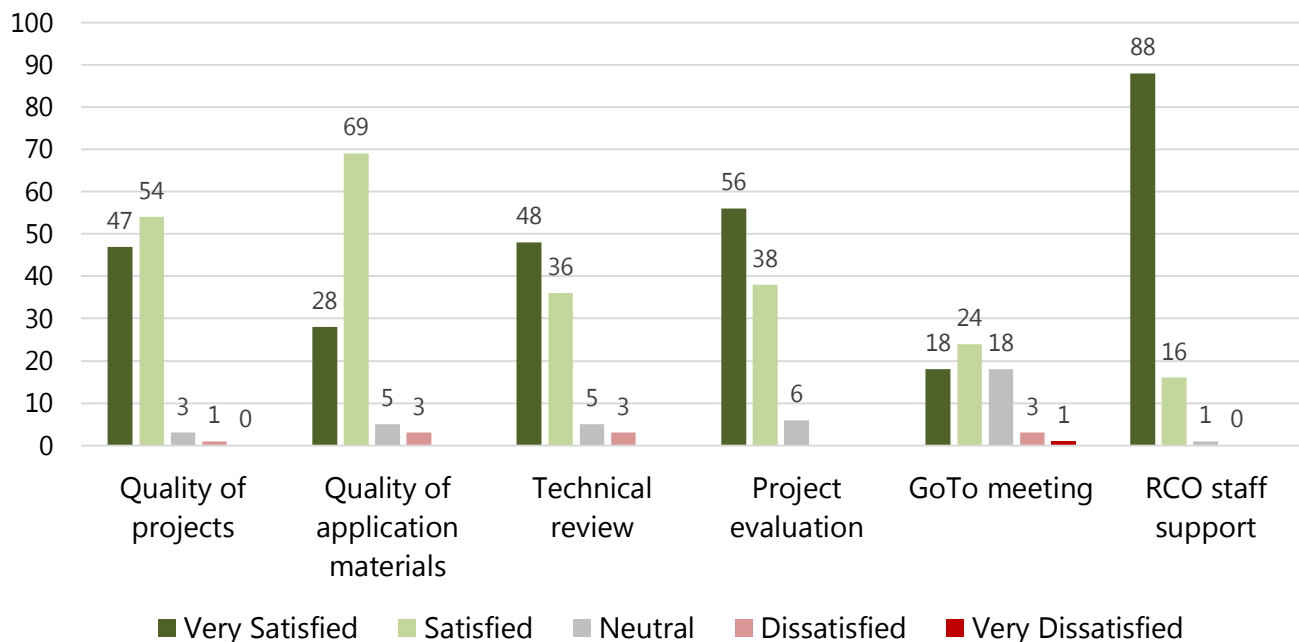
Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
LWCF	In Person Review and Evaluation	RCO staff were clear, timely, and supportive and facilitated the evaluation process very effectively.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	In Person Review and Evaluation	Marguerite did a great job.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I have served on a variety of RCO review/evaluation committees for nearly 30 years, either as an agency representative or private citizen. It's a rewarding experience and I have found RCO staff all to be eminent professionals.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	The staff did an excellent job for all phases of this process.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	It was great to work with the RCO staff, very helpful and clear.
WWRP - State Lands Development	Written Review and Evaluation	RCO and the State of Washington should be proud of the quality of all their staff that I have dealt with in grant reviews and applications.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	RCO staff exhibited great skill and professionalism.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	All of my interactions with RCO staff have been professional, timely and satisfactory.

Other

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
ALEA*	In Person Review and Evaluation	I've completed my two cycle term. Thanks.
BIG*	Written Review and Evaluation	These evaluations were done at home without the benefit of hearing other committee members thoughts.
FARR	In Person Review and Evaluation	I would be happy to serve again on the FARR Board.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	I am getting farther and farther out of touch with these programs, since it has been many years since I was involved in them. I am beginning to question my utility.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	It was a great experience and added to my hiking club years provided for a positive situation for me.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	I did not request reimbursement.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	We had trouble with the projector at one point and a good portion of someone's presentation was done in the wrong color, which did a disservice to the presenter.

Question Series 4: Overall satisfaction

Overall Satisfaction



	Percent Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied	Percent Neutral ⁷	Percent Satisfied or Very Satisfied
Quality of projects	1%	3%	96%
Quality of application materials	3%	5%	92%
Technical review	3%	5%	90%
Project evaluation	0%	6%	94%
GoTo meeting ⁸	4%	17%	41%
RCO staff support	0%	1%	99%

Notes

- Survey respondents were generally satisfied with the 2014 grant round.
- Respondents provided comments on the evaluation criteria, particularly recommendations on improvements to the criteria used in the WWRP-Trails program.

⁷ Responses of "NA" were not included.

⁸ GoTo Meeting received 39 responses of "NA."

Categorized Comments by Program and Review/Evaluation Type

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents, separated into general categories. Programs marked with an asterisk denote comments made by people who responded for more than one program.

Advisory Committee Discussion

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	I would recommend the committee members have a short discussion after the final presentations but before the final scoring to hear different thoughts on the presentations. The process moves very fast and I am sure each member sees the project differently which affects the individual scores. A short discussion would be helpful in case I missed an important point.
BIG*	Written Review and Evaluation	It was time consuming reading all the information on a project and sorting out the important parts. Hearing other committee members thoughts would make the process more efficient. I would spend almost an hour on each project reading all the material before I started making comments. it was very easy to miss important items because of the volume of material for each proposal. Part of my problem is my computer is at times slow and I cannot review several documents on the screen at the same time.

Evaluation Criteria

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Some evaluation questions could be edited to clarify scoring. Committee members all have a background related to boating but from different perspectives so scoring is naturally going to vary.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	There are a lot of potential tweaks that could be made to the eval criteria (esp re: non-gov't contributions) and RCO should consider a way to evaluate small requests separately (i.e. a \$20k project vs. a \$500k project) or to break out small jurisdictions from large jurisdiction.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think that the evaluation should include riparian vegetation. a river flowing through a Douglas fir plantation is not necessarily riparian.

WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	Do not agree with questions of population, water access and scenic views this are all very bias questions. Cost efficiency (matching funds) scoring should be set criteria scored by staff.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	The process format allows an elevator to easily compare projects side by side. However, sometimes the criteria seemed a bit biased towards projects near water (which cannot be accomplished for many eastern Washington projects) and the wildlife and sustainability criteria seemed a bit unclear and/or difficult to answer for the presenters.
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	I provided feedback at the follow-up meeting regarding the criteria and recommendations for improving - in particular, habitat connectivity and water views sections...

GoTo Meeting

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Go To meeting okay for technical review only.
RTP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Have not used the go to meeting as yet. The meeting is scheduled for Dec.
WWRP - Water Access	In Person Review and Evaluation	Electronic meeting process not there yet - technology still getting in the way rather than helping with 'live' meetings

Other

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	Not all projects presented were ready for "prime time," but I understand staff bringing them forward to educate the presenters.
FARR	In Person Review and Evaluation	Only one applicant seemed to be asking for monies that I [personally] thought should have come out of their income. Others were all truly in need of help.
LWCF	In Person Review and Evaluation	Overall I think the projects are very worthy of funding and they usually make very good presentations. Occasionally someone doesn't follow the advice from tech review. I understand the need for using go to meeting, and it was much better this year, but it is still better when the applicants are in the room.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	After so many years of this process, the applicants are often repeat applicants, most of the written applications are standard/canned/fill-in-the-blanks applications, most

		of the photos are off-the-shelf photos, and most of the oral presentations follow one or two standard scripts. The one-of-a-kind written applications and oral presentations were, for the most part, the worst. How can evaluators, in the time and resources that they have, fairly determine the best? I don't know.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	What is true for me about the non-highway new construction/maintenance application/evaluation process, is also true for the education and enforcement application/evaluation process: Given the history of the NOVA programs, and given local, state, federal agencies continuous need for money to support/maintain/develop natural/recreational areas, it is not surprising that most of the applications and presentations for NOVA funding have become standardized, off-the-shelf, fill-in-the-blanks-applications. Even the photos seem like out-of-one basket. How can one reasonably decide between such applications? Especially, if the applications are for sites that one has never experienced first-hand?
RTP	In Person Review and Evaluation	The quality of application materials varied greatly, and it was often quite difficult to judge on merit versus style. Also, the evaluation process is just exhausting. I don't know if there is any way around it, though.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	In Person Review and Evaluation	I felt that the quality of the projects was diminished from previous years because of the change from fee-simple purchase to conservation easements with continued land use activities perhaps negative to species and critical habitat.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think it works best when presenters are told from the beginning to follow the criteria from point to point to make sure they are in the right category and their presentation is effective.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	Most of the projects are worthy of development. As for the materials, the smaller the jurisdiction and the earlier in the development phase of a project, there appeared to be a diminishment in the quality of the materials. This round, most of the applicants did pay attention to advisory panel comments to improve their applications. As for GoTo meeting, I think this is a dis-service to the applicant. It is like a job interview. Phone interviews can be successful but difficult.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	See comments in number 5 above.

WWRP - Riparian Protection	In Person Review and Evaluation	Only we missed a list of all the species involved in the nature areas. Some applicants did give a species list and what their status was, others did only partly.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	I find a significant problem is systemic. Namely, dealing with projects that have different parts split between different programs or years. For example, (#1) an acquisition with different portions split between programs. Or (#2) a multi-phase restoration over a period of years. For #1, this inevitably means having to (at least somewhat) have faith that the other portions of the acquisition are/are not funded. For #2, there is inevitably a desire (potential bias) to see a program continue or be completed. I understand the difficulties due to the siloed nature of the different grant categories and biennial nature of the funding, but perhaps there is some way to deal with this systemic problem.
WWRP - State Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	I appreciate the preparation and process that goes into evaluating projects under this program. It was a pleasure to participate.
WWRP - Urban Wildlife Habitat*	In Person Review and Evaluation	I think it works best when presenters are told from the beginning to follow the criteria from point to point to make sure they are in the right category and their presentation is effective.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	I had trouble finding some information on the website - some of what was included in the printed materials. It should be easy to find the web version of the printed materials. The website is a little confusing. It would help if staff could prepare some comparison information ahead of time, such as cost per acre, cost per farmable acre, and at least links to sites where normal production and prices (how many cow/calf pairs per acres, how many bushels/tons of alfalfa, how much from an acre of carrots) - not the information, but links.

RCO Staff

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
BIG	Written Review and Evaluation	Great Experience, quite an honor. RCO staff is very professional and prepared at every step.
NOVA - Recreation	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	Staff was exceptional; liked Darrell's keeping everyone on task; Lorinda was great to work with. I was surprised at the grammatical errors in the application materials - small, but important.

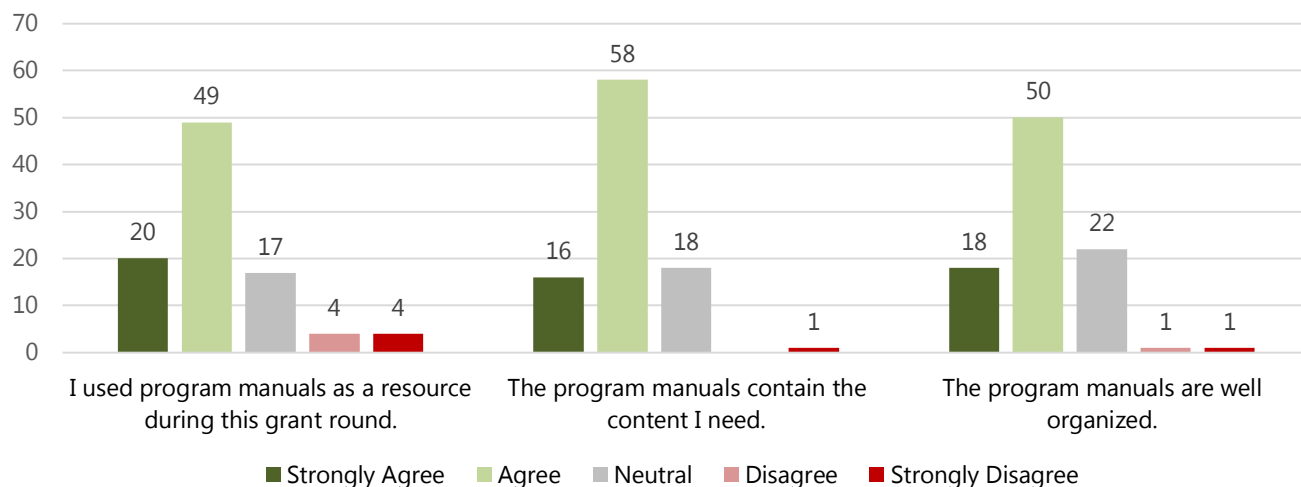
WWRP - State Lands Development**	Written Review and Evaluation	I think it would be better if RCO staff support (not the moderator) could engage more in the evaluation process. They would sit up front with the project sponsor but never say anything through the whole process.. Both technical review and final project reviews.
WWRP - State Lands Development**	Written Review and Evaluation	RCO support staff could be a bit more engaged with the process during (dry run) evaluation.. It seems like in most cases they sit with the sponsor and don't say anything one way or another during the evaluation.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	Again, I cannot say enough good things about Marguerite! I also had very prompt and efficient help from everyone I dealt with. I think we got some outstanding projects, with few exceptions, and most applicants tried to address deficiencies pointed out during the technical review

Technical Review

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
LWCF*	In Person Review and Evaluation	The quality of the projects varied, but most of them improved from the technical review to the evaluation.
NOVA - Recreation*	Written Review and In Person Evaluation	Technical review didn't provide me with any insights or new knowledge about the projects. Seemed like repeats from the previous cycle.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	Again, those applicants that didn't go through technical review suffered during final review. Now that I have gone through 2 review cycles, I can definitely see the inadequate presentations if you hadn't gone through the technical review process. The top half of the projects were excellent this year and very hard to separate their values & importance. It speaks to the importance of getting more money in this program to really make a dent in conserving farmland.

Question Series 5: What was your experience working with manuals?

What was your experience working with manuals?



	Percent Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Percent Neutral	Percent Agree or Strongly Agree
I used manuals as a resource during this grant round.	9%	18%	73%
The manuals contain the content I need.	1%	19%	80%
The manuals are well organized.	2%	24%	74%

Notes

- Three quarters of survey respondents use manuals as a resource during the grant round.
- Survey respondents generally felt that the manuals have needed content and are well organized.

Comments by Program and Evaluation Type

The following table includes unedited comments from survey respondents.

Program	Type of Review/Evaluation	Comment
ALEA	In Person Review and Evaluation	Program manuals seemed vague and repetitive.
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	I have an old copy but have referenced the manual(s) on-line.
BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	I used them routinely during the evaluation process

BFP	In Person Review and Evaluation	There was one criteria that I found confusing and I passed the information along during the meeting. I can't be more specific as I am travelling and will not be home in time to complete the survey with better information.
RTP	Written Evaluation	The manuals generally contain the information I am looking for, but it is not always easy to find.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	I really didn't reference them.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	In Person Review and Evaluation	Overall the process went well.
WWRP - Local Parks	In Person Review and Evaluation	N/A
WWRP - State Lands Development	Written Review and Evaluation	Sometimes it's hard to find specific things that you are looking for in the manuals... Mostly, because there is so much information...
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Written Review and Evaluation	I'd like to see monitoring addressed - I know it is not a "fundable" action, but applicants should be asked what kind of monitoring they will do (with volunteers or their own staff), or if they will evaluate and modify projects as they progress, based on monitoring information
WWRP - Trails	In Person Review and Evaluation	I didn't have enough experience with the manuals to answer the last one...

Question Series 6: Do you have suggestions for how RCO could improve participation in post-evaluation conferences?

Notes

- Several respondents noted issues with dialing into the post-evaluation conference remotely.
- Respondents also commented on the need for RCO staff to provide more advance notice and adjust the timeline for the conference. Categorized Comments by Program

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents, separated into general categories.

Categorized Comments by Program

Remote Phone-In

Program	Comment
ALEA	Don't mute the Phone
BFP	Be sure sound system in conference room is working well for conference calls.
NOVA - Recreation	I was disappointed in the Go To Meeting process. Couldn't understand participants and conversation from the room. There was a lot of interference.
NOVA - Recreation	The phone-in plan was a failure. Voices on my phone were muffled, broken, unintelligible, covered up by random sounds, gone.
WWRP - Trails	Not really. I think the option to call-in is excellent.

Scheduling Challenges

Program	Comment
BFP	Face to face is preferred but I understand the funding constraints so the way it was done this year was acceptable. Unfortunately, I had made a previous commitment for the day and was out of town. Knowing in advance would help.
FARR	I have difficulty w/scheduling to participate in the post-evaluation. This survey offers the opportunity to provide some feedback, with my scheduling challenges.
NOVA - Recreation	Perhaps offer two potential meeting times. I was unable to virtually attend the post-evaluation conference owing to a scheduling conflict, and I would have loved to have had another opportunity to hear the wrap-up.
RTP	Schedule the meetings at a location that is central to the participants and not always have them in Olympia.

WWRP - Critical Habitat	not really time of year is critical. August and September are heavy field season for project and survey folks. Later would be better for a post-evaluation conference.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	The time between evaluation and post evaluation should be shorter and in person. That would give the opportunity for the evaluators to discuss their reasons for the ranking.
WWRP - Local Parks	I have not participated in post eval conferences. I seem to recollect that typically fall in late August. If they were pushed to the first week of September (after Labor Day), participation might increase.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	N/A. I have never been able - due to my own schedule - to participate in post-evaluation conferences
WWRP - Water Access	Better scheduling. Ours was the Friday before Labor Day weekend so telephone meeting lightly attended.
WWRP - Water Access	I think more advance notice on the date and time of the post-evaluation conference would be helpful. Only had a couple of days notice this year and fortunately was able to juggle my schedule around in order to accommodate it. Other's may not have been able to do so.

Other

Program	Comment
ALEA	Stress importance upfront.
BFP	Frankly, I don't see the importance at all. I do enjoy getting the final ranking by email. More than anything it helps me with "self evaluation."
BFP	No
FARR	Not at this time.
LWCF	No
RTP	Have not attended one yet, so I will have to wait and see
WWRP - Critical Habitat	None
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	It would be interesting to know if the applicants really hear what is being said to them about technical review importance.
WWRP - Local Parks	N/A
WWRP - Local Parks	No
WWRP - Riparian Protection	Would be great if after a projects gets funding they publish there 'lessons learned' about their project, so others could learn as well. Or maybe RCO could organize a conference regarding a topic to offer the possibilities for knowledge exchange between projects.
WWRP - State Lands Development	Make sure that evaluators understand the true importance of participating in the Post-evaluation process.
WWRP - State Lands Development	n/a
WWRP - State Parks	none

WWRP - State Parks	Perhaps emphasize the value of it to RCO - if it has particular value. Otherwise, no thoughts...
WWRP - Trails	Not this time around.

Question Series 7: Is there a part of the process that causes you frustration?

Notes

- Survey respondents were concerned about how to provide valuable feedback to applicants, given time constraints.
- Survey respondents suggested the greater diversity on the advisory committee would be helpful.
- Respondents also commented about the difficulty of using online materials.
- For the RTP program, several respondents voiced concerned that there was overlap and/or similarity between projects.

Comments by Program

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents, categorized by program.

Program	Comment
ALEA	The one thing I noticed was that those evaluators using their computers were not really paying attention to the presenters. I like hard copies, it makes me prepare before the meeting with the presenter and if I think there is a conflict with information I can look it up after the presentation. I can pay closer attention to the presenter.
ALEA	No.
ALEA	I would have benefited from discussion with other panel members. It was apparent to me in the last meeting that some panel members had information or concerns that were not raised while the applicants were present. This has two problems: 1. Other panel members did not learn about the concerns and were not able to use that information , and 2. Applicants were not able to respond to what may or may not have been a legitimate issue. I suggest that a discussion could be accomplished after technical review, without the applicants present, but with the staff member working with the applicants present. This would allow the staff member to answer any questions or raise issues later with the applicant, so that concerns could be addressed in the final proposal.
BFP	There were several projects that came forward that did not appear to have received much guidance from RCO staff. The quality could have been improved with more technical leadership and candid assessment of strengths and weaknesses of projects. It was difficult to rate projects that omitted essential information about site or comparison that may have been known to others more familiar with the site. I would have liked to have the negative assessments of the projects be more visible and rating adjustments.
BFP	I did not experience frustration at any time during the process

BFP	As I mentioned previously, Technical review can help an "inexperienced" applicant with an urgent and compelling "need", have a better chance to succeed. Personally, I would like to opportunity have the time to challenge the applicant to understand the grant process is TRULY a completion. On average less than half the projects will be funded. I am surprised when projects may be presented within the same city or county, or share the same body of water, without acknowledgement of the neighbor project. With more Technical time, I am sure my group of evaluators will help the applicants better understand what it take to "win."
BFP	I do not have any good suggestions because I understand the constraints of time and money. During and after the final evaluations there are so many factors to understand in a very short time that I usually wish I had more time to discuss some of the important points with other committee members before I score the project.
BFP	Not really, but I might say that the number of projects limits time spent on each one for detailed presentation and evaluation. The more inclusive but concise presentation most likely receives a good score.
FARR	The online documentation was so voluminous I didn't have opportunity to review it all. Maybe I just didn't understand the organization?
FARR	It would seem productive if there were some means for the members of the advisory panel to offer input / expertise to applicants after the technical review, but before evaluations. Realizing this would need to be unbiased, perhaps some way that panel members could provide ideas and information to the FARR project managers in an organized manner would buffer this?
FARR	none
LWCF	For agencies applying for a grant for the first time, if possible, it would be helpful if the grant manager could view the PowerPoint presentation prior to the technical review. This would give the agency some valuable feedback and it would reduce the amount of suggestions thrown at them during the review.
LWCF	It's very hard to incorporate the federal goals in the evaluation. They come out way too close to evaluation time for the applicants to effectively incorporate them into their projects. Further, it is difficult to weigh and score how well the applicants address the federal goals. This can be improved by publishing the goals at the beginning of the two year cycle and sticking with them through evaluation before updating the goals for the subsequent two year cycle.
LWCF	There is potential for conflict of interest among some of the evaluators who run programs eligible for funds. This is common and appropriate, and adds to the level of knowledge and expertise in advisory committees of this nature. However, standards and ethics related to potential for

	<p>conflict of interest should have fuller explanation/discussion at the beginning of the evaluation process.</p>
NOVA - Education & Enforcement	<p>This is perhaps unavoidable: but nevertheless, the general "sameness" of most proposed projects, applications, and PowerPoint presentations makes evaluation a difficult process. I can see many reasons for the overall similarities of so many projects and presentations, and it's hard to say how that situation could be changed. But at the least I think the RCO grant managers could emphasize with applicants the need to better differentiate their proposals from other ones. Otherwise, the evaluation scores are all pretty close, and the fund/no fund line ends up being drawn by fine details of omission or embellishment, rather than by more substantive ones.</p>
NOVA - Recreation	<p>I cannot read and evaluate fairly and respond well to RCO applications on one or more computers. Others can. I have some confidence about my evaluation of an application, if, among other things, I know the application's site as a consequence of my own on-the-site experience. If I don't have such knowledge of an application's site, I can only guess as a consequence of seeing faint lines in the application and a speaker's brief, compelling story. Maybe others see better.</p>
NOVA - Recreation	<p>I was unable to complete a technical review of the applications by machine. I was not skillful enough in using two machines. I might have been able to do this review if I had had a printed copy of each application and permission to write suggestions or questions directly on the copies. Others were able to do the technical reviews by machine. But I think it unfair to ask volunteers to give a week of their lives to technical reviews of and written responses to 100-120 applications, on a machine, or not, in addition to giving a week of their lives to a final evaluation of these applications in-person.. Paid staff should do the technical reviews. Concerning applications for maintenance. Someone asked for support for maintenance of Site #1. If I didn't know anything about the site first-hand, or the current condition of the site first-hand, or the current condition of the applicant's staff and equipment first-hand, or what, exactly, was needed to do the maintenance work the applicant said needed to be done, how was I suppose to fairly judge if the applicant's request for \$ for staff and equipment was reasonable? I couldn't. I could only guess. Which I did.</p>
NOVA - Recreation	<p>The only frustration I had was with the GoTo Meeting. Some of the applicants "read" their slides verbatim - almost like they weren't familiar with their project. It would have been nice to hear more casual explanations. I do understand there was a time commitment and not everyone is comfortable speaking publicly.</p>

RTP	The varying sizes of items in the application files and orientation of some pages is hard to deal with. Some applications had general information, not specifics of how they would be using the funds.
RTP	No
RTP	When the applicants come back with the same project after technical review has made helpful suggestions that would improve the project and/or the presentation quality.
RTP	Applications overlapped. It would have been good to get information about that up front. I would have liked to tally my scores in the spreadsheet. I would have liked to see more information about what types of projects are preferred.
RTP	No, all the RTP projects are obviously needed. I can't imagine our backcountry trails without this program. The only tough part is having to evaluate projects from the same sponsor for four or five different areas. Most are always worded the same and I just wonder if it's possible to streamline that somehow?
RTP	The RTP evaluation is frustrating because there are so many projects that are very similar to one another. 80% of the general projects are a forest service district in desperate need of funding to pay for staff to maintain trails, and 80% of the education projects are forest service districts wanting some version of a snow ranger. Mainly it is frustrating that the federal government works on this inefficient method of districts competing for limited resources, with it sometimes coming down to the communication skills of the ranger who applies. But it is also frustrating to try to differentiate my scores from one project to another.
WWRP - Critical Habitat	see above about fee simple/conservation easement.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	Already said above...
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	Trying to get the actual rankings and evaluations done in the time provided.
WWRP - Local Parks	I am not thrilled with the first round; too many people sand-bag - knowing that the first round doesn't count. I would eliminate it.
WWRP - Local Parks	It would only be that not all applicants seem to view the technical review as a very important part of the process. Clearly, those applicants that use the technical review and incorporate our suggestions into their final application materials, or explain why they didn't, have a leg up on applicants that don't use the technical review. I think the proof is in which projects get the highest scores by the evaluation committees.
WWRP - Local Parks	It would be great to recruit more diversity - age, race, professional background - for the evaluation cmtes. What about a representation from a PTA parent who helped on an community effort to build a playground? Or a member of a soccer league? Or a mountain biker?

	RCO should consider ways it can tweak the overall process in order to make broader participation possible.
WWRP - Local Parks	There are two elements. See my response to question 4 dealing with length of presentation/Q and A and the four day scheduled versus a five day schedule. The second is that there continues to be the periodic application and presentation that in my mind seeks to "bamboozle" advisory panel members. I would recommend that the grant managers step up their reinforcement that it is not in the applicant's interest to obfuscate or stretch the truth. Applicants should be made aware, if they are not already, that the majority of panelists have served on this committee at least once if not twice the current round. And they have expertise and working knowledge of a breath of parks and recreation issues.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	No frustrations, found the process to be smooth.
WWRP - State Lands Development	no
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	Please see my comment on question #6. I'm not offering a solution, but since this would likely require legislative changes to the program, it would be good to start thinking about this.
WWRP - State Lands Restoration	See answer to question #8. I really think we should be more tuned in to monitoring. I was frustrated when, during technical review, I asked questions of applicants regarding any monitoring that they might be planning, and how they would use the information. RCO staff responded, "This is not a fundable activity" in red letters inserted into the application. I understand it is not, but by putting that reply into the record it implies either a)applicant doesn't need to answer the question; or b)you cannot or should not admit that you are doing any. It seems to be a very responsible question to ask, since monitoring will give us better projects.
WWRP - State Parks	I think the process is very well defined and results in appropriate ranking of the projects. One thing that sticks in my mind is the importance of choosing projects that are a good, solid investment of state resources. In that sense, I felt a bit frustrated about the cost-benefit of some high dollar projects vs. some lower dollar projects.
WWRP - State Parks	Inability to break down dollar commitments to assist quality programs in need.
WWRP - State Parks	Project snap shot is an asset.
WWRP - Trails	I often find it difficult to shuffle between the printed application materials and online materials.
WWRP - Trails	Maybe some clarification on the sustainability and/or wildlife criteria for applications.
WWRP - Trails	No.

WWRP - Trails	Technical review is too time consuming and doesn't add much value. I recommend that RCO staff provide technical review and make sure that the applicants understand the questions that they are being evaluated on.
WWRP - Water Access	This is not necessarily a frustration, but I would encourage RCO to take a critical look at the adding diversity to the advisory committees. I am only familiar with the one committee on which I sit, but it is not diverse in age, gender or race/ethnicity. RCO would get a better product out of these committees if there were more diversity of background, culture and experience.

Question Series 8: Is there a part of the process that works especially well for you?

Notes

- Advisory committee members provided diverse comments on what went well during the 2014 grant round.
- Some respondents commented on the importance of face-to-face interactions, while others praised the ability to participate remotely.
- Advisory committee member opinions were split on the merits of hard copy versus electronic documentation.
- Survey respondents expressed an appreciation for early access to online materials, although it was sometimes difficult for evaluators to focus on the specific materials they needed to review.

Comments by Program

The following tables include unedited comments from survey respondents, categorized by program.

Program	Comment
ALEA	I think the current process is excellent and would suggest nothing.
ALEA	I think the technical review step was really well done and is critical to improving applications and presentations. The difference really showed in the evaluation presentations.
ALEA	Next time, I would suggest that this type of survey is sent immediately after the post-evaluation conferences. I had several suggestions at the time (minor issues), which we discussed, but I can't remember what they were now that several months have passed.
ALEA	The moderators were great.
BFP	I am not sure that the video conferencing works that well at Technical review. This is the time for questions, this is the time the evaluators can help with project focus. I understand the costs associated with travel, but a project best chance to succeed is to have as much input as possible at this "practice" run. If Final Evaluation is all done electronically, it's OK by me. To really answer this question, I think the one-on-one, face-to-face, personal aspect of this process is what REALLY works well.
BFP	I liked having the applications available electronically
BFP	Technical review was very good and did offer opportunity for guidance.
BFP	The face to face discussions with the other committee members. Having the opportunity to review each project before the technical review.
BFP	Using the RCO on-line access for proposed boating projects ahead of the technical review helps me be familiar with the location and type of project; taking notes during technical review helps me frame questions and reminds me of the project later at evaluation time.
FARR	Being able to use the manual & having the information in front of us as we are judging the applicants. Thank you for that.

FARR	The email - link communications allow me to efficiently review the projects prior to the on-site tech review. I can also see changes and updates easily prior to the evaluations.
LWCF	The expertise and support of RCO staff is important.
LWCF	The schedule of start times is always good for travel.... thanks for that
NOVA - Recreation	As intensive as it was, I would not change the in-person evaluation period. It was valuable to be in a focused setting and be able to talk to other evaluators as well as RCO staff and those presenting proposals.
NOVA - Recreation	I liked the flow of the process - it kept us on time - Darrell did an excellent job facilitating - not an easy task. There were enough breaks to refresh your mind:)
NOVA - Recreation	Meeting and talking informally with RCO staff, other members of the advisory committee, and applicants.
NOVA - Recreation	Receiving and reading instructive e-mails from the RCO staff throughout the review/evaluation process. Talking informally with others on the evaluation committee and with RCO staff during the week that we did our final evaluation of applications together.
RTP	Being able to do this online is very helpful since I travel a bit.
RTP	Electronic access to the documents.
RTP	Evaluations online in the privacy of my own home is great!
RTP	I liked the presentations Marguerite gave before the LWCF meetings. It was very helpful to have a reminder of the criteria and the process because I don't always have a lot of time for prep work beforehand.
RTP	On-Line aspect works well
WWRP - Critical Habitat	The presentation format and moderation are excellent.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	Having a great team of people to review projects. I think that is the strength of the program.
WWRP - Farmland Preservation	Technical review. It is really useful preparation for the final evaluation and it's a great chance to ask questions.
WWRP - Local Parks	I like all parts of the process. Kudos to RCO!
WWRP - Local Parks	It is a beautiful thing when an applicant clearly addresses each of the criteria.
WWRP - Local Parks	Talking about the projects as a cmte - I appreciate hearing others' perspectives and it helps me think through my own.
WWRP - Riparian Protection	Mix of paper and web-based materials. Moderator of sessions was very effective, stayed on task, provided direction, and was direct and forthright with applicants.
WWRP - State Lands Development	The entire process worked well. At no time did I feel frustrated while reviewing projects.
WWRP - State Lands Development	Yes, getting the project evaluations down to three days was excellent... and gave me some time to get other things at work accomplished during the week.

WWRP - State Lands Restoration	I enjoyed the round table discussion with other reviewers after in-person project presentations. I'd like to have had more time allotted for that.
WWRP - State Parks	I appreciated that, being a citizen, my input was accepted and appreciated without any feeling that I might be less qualified than parks officials.
WWRP - State Parks	I like the format.
WWRP - State Parks	Overall, I think the process is excellent. I like the combination of the technical review and final evaluations, as a way to see the projects come together.
WWRP - Trails	I thought the organization and communication from RCO was good, I always knew where, when and what was expected of me.
WWRP - Trails	The live website of the projects helped me with looking up letters of support. As this is a full 5 points, it is important to confirm the information found on the presentation slides.
WWRP - Trails	The technical review sessions are very important for getting introduced to the project and determining eligibility.
WWRP - Trails	Yes!!! Listening to my fellow evaluators, especially during the tech review, but also during the Q & A portion of the final presentations and during breaks. I am an avid, longtime consumer of trails as a cyclist (road and mountain), hiker and just someone who likes to walk once in a while. I have ideas about them and have spent both labor and money trying to improve them. However, everyone else on that advisory committee is, or was, a professional involved with designing, building or maintaining trails at the very least. They understood trails proposals as PROJECTS. I learned a great deal from them, and hope to learn more.
WWRP - Water Access	I like having the hard copy of the documents at the on-site review and evaluation meetings. I don't have access to a laptop so a hard copy of the printed material is needed.